# On the Alphabetic Scribal Curriculum at Ugarit

Robert Hawley

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE 51ST RENCONTRE ASSYRIOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE

Held at
THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE
of
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
JULY 18–22, 2005

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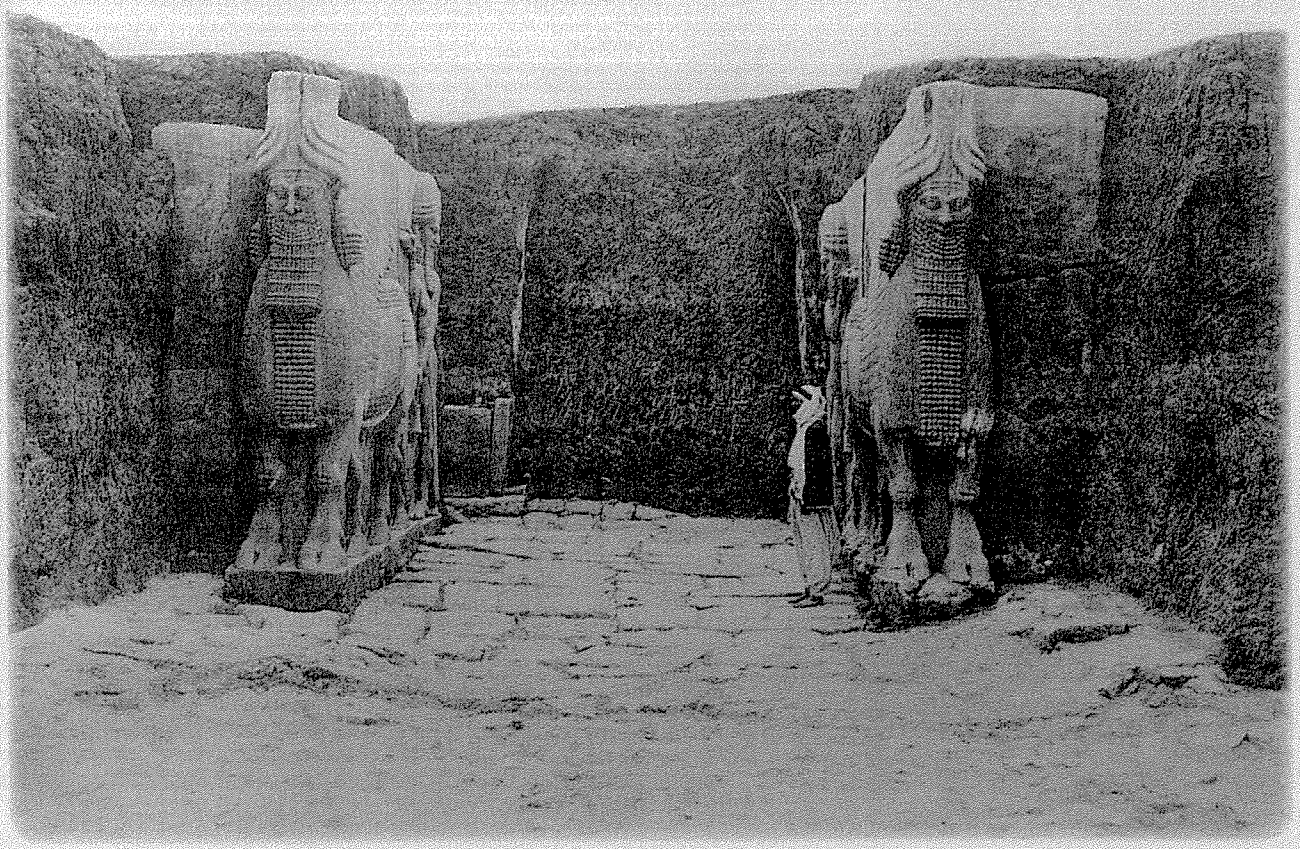
ROBERT D. BIGGS, JENNIE MYERS, *and* MARTHA T. ROTH



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Dedicated to the Memory of Erica Reiner

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# ON THE ALPHABETIC SCRIBAL CURRICULUM AT UGARIT*

*Robert Hawley, University of Michigan*

## INTRODUCTION

This paper attempts to formulate a viable theoretical approach to the interpretation of the corpus of Ugaritic texts which reflect scribal education. It is ultimately intended as a contribution to the ongoing project of the Franco-Syrian Mission de Ras Shamra to republish the Ugaritic texts by literary genre and on the basis of renewed systematic collation, and, in this case, to the preparation of a volume devoted to the school texts.[1] The epigraphic portion of the project is nearing completion: over twenty of the Ugaritic school texts conserved in the museums of Syria and France have been copied and collated over the course of four summer-long study seasons, from 2001 to 2005. In moving beyond epigraphy, however, and in the direction of a synthetic overview of the local school curriculum, it quickly became clear that Ugaritologists have little choice but to begin by following in the footsteps of Assyriologists who have already done a good deal of work on this subject.[2]

## 1. A MESOPOTAMIAN ANALOGY?

In the 1991 publication of his doctoral dissertation, Wilfred van Soldt included a seven-page appendix on the lexical texts from Ugarit,[3] in which he discussed among other things, "the curriculum which the scribes had to follow in studying Sumerian and Akkadian."[4] His two methodological points of departure are stated explicitly: "[The] order [of texts studied] can be determined from catchlines at the end of texts or from tablets which contain more than one text."[5] He then offers the following reconstruction:[6]

[alph.?] [→?] tu-ta-ti → Sal/(Svo) → Sa/(SaV) + appendix →? G [→?] Ḫḫ → Lu [→] Izi → Diri

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* Dennis Pardee's careful reading of an earlier draft of this paper allowed me to correct several errors. In the discussion following the delivery of the paper, Peter T. Daniels, Dominique Charpin, Wilfred van Soldt, Baruch Levine, and Ignacio Márquez Rowe offered clarifications and helpful comments on several matters. Needless to say, remaining errors are solely my own responsibility.

[1] On this project, see Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee, "L'épigraphie ougaritique: 1973–1993," in *Le pays d'Ougarit autour de 1200 av. J.-C., Histoire et Archéologie: Actes du Colloque International à Paris, 28 juin–1er juillet 1993*, Ras Shamra-Ougarit 11, edited by Marguerite Yon et al. (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1995), p. 28; and Dennis Pardee, "La réédition des textes ougaritiques," in *Actes de la table ronde internationale "Ras Shamra-Ougarit: du Bronze moyen au Bronze récent: nouvelles perspectives de recherche," à Lyon, 30 novembre–1er décembre 2001*, Travaux de la Maison de l'Orient, edited by Yves Calvet (Lyon and Paris: Maison de l'Orient Mediterranéen and de Boccard, forthcoming).

[2] For useful surveys of previous scholarship on the broader subject of Mesopotamian school curricula, see Niek Veldhuis, "Elementary Education at Nippur: The Lists of Trees and Wooden Objects" (Ph.D. diss., Groningen University, 1997), pp. 5–6 (and passim); and Petra Gesche, *Schulunterricht in Babylonien im ersten Jahrtausend vor Christus*, Alter Orient und Altes Testament 275 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2000), pp. 9–27, both with bibliography.

[3] Wilfred van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit: Dating and Grammar*, Alter Orient und Altes Testament 40 (Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon & Bercker and Neukirchener Verlag, 1991), pp. 747–53.

[4] Van Soldt, *Akkadian of Ugarit*, p. 750. On the subject of Mesopotamian scribal traditions at Ugarit, note also Jean Nougayrol, "L'influence babylonienne à Ugarit, d'après les textes en cunéiformes classiques," *Syria* 39 (1962): 28–35; Anson Rainey, "The Scribe at Ugarit: His Position and Influence," *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities* 3/4 (1968): 126–47; J. Krecher, "Schreiberschulung in Ugarit: Die Tradition von Listen und sumerischen Texten," *Ugarit Forschungen* 1 (1969): 131–58; and Manfried Dietrich, "Die Sprachforschung in Ugarit," in *History of the Language Sciences*, Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft 18/1, edited by Sylvain Auroux et al. (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2000), pp. 15–16, with some recent bibliography.

[5] Van Soldt, *Akkadian of Ugarit*, p. 750.

[6] Van Soldt, *Akkadian of Ugarit*, p. 751, using the following abbreviations: Sal = Silbenalphabet A (or Syllable Alphabet A); Svo = Silbenvokabular A (or Syllable Vocabulary A); Sa = Syllabary A; SaV = Syllabary A Vocabulary; G = Weidner God List (or "liste AN"); Ḫḫ = Ḫar.ra = ḫubullu (or $Ur_5$-ra ḫubullu). On these lists in general, see Antoine Cavigneaux, "Lexikalische Listen," *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* 6 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1983), pp. 609–41.

The first element in this chain illustrates the suggestion that the traditional Mesopotamian cursus as practiced at Ugarit was preceded by training in alphabetic writing. Such a view is supported by at least two considerations: (1) it agrees with the principle of an increasing level of difficulty,[7] and (2) it seems confirmed by RS 22.225 (KTU$^2$ 1.96),[8] a tablet which contains two texts: an incantation in Ugaritic on one side,[9] which ought to belong to an advanced stage of the alphabetic curriculum, and the syllabary Tu-ta-ti on the other,[10] which ought to belong to an elementary stage of the Mesopotamian curriculum.

Van Soldt was well aware of other tablets which combined Mesopotamian and local alphabetic school texts, however. RS 20.148+ (KTU$^2$ 5.16),[11] for example, also contains multiple texts: an excerpt of the Ras Shamra Grammatical Text copied three times,[12] with interspersed Ugaritic abecedaries. This situation is thus quite different from that of RS 22.225: in RS 20.148+ we find an exercise in Mesopotamian cuneiform of an intermediate to fairly advanced level combined with Ugaritic exercises of an introductory, elementary level. It was perhaps counter-examples such as this which led van Soldt to revise his proposal for the Ras Shamra curriculum in his 1995 article on scribal education at Ugarit, in which the alphabetic curriculum is no longer postulated as preceding the Mesopotamian curriculum in the local schools.[13]

Another important contribution of van Soldt's 1995 article is the explicit inclusion of omen compendia and literary compositions within the scholastic curriculum.[14] Van Soldt pointed out that the presence of parallel texts from other sites shows that these works were part of a wider "canon" of traditional texts, and not original local compositions. Furthermore, their archival distribution indicates a consistent link with lexical tablets. Finally, the level of proficiency in these texts is characterized as generally low.[15] Taken together, these factors suggest that the copying and recopying of Mesopotamian omen compendia, incantations, and literary works at Ugarit as elsewhere was part of a more advanced level of scribal training, beyond the learning of syllabaries, logogram lists, and text structure. In more general terms, such a broader view of the curriculum fits well with Oppenheim's memorable dichotomy, which distinguished texts representing the stream of scribal tradition on the one hand, from those reflecting mundane day-to-day activities on the other.[16] If "it was considered an essential part of the training of each scribe to copy faithfully

[7] See Wilfred van Soldt, "Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts and Scribal Education at Ugarit and Its Implications for the Alphabetic Literary Texts," in *Ugarit: Ein ostmediterranes Kulturzentrum im Alten Orient: Ergebnisse und Perspektiven der Forschung, I. Ugarit und seinem altorientalische Umwelt*, Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt-Syrien-Palästinas 7, edited by Manfried Dietrich and Oswald Loretz (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995), p. 172: "The lexical texts are not all of the same level of difficulty. As one would expect, their arrangement is didactic, that is, they tended to be studied in an order which ensured a progressive level of difficulty."

[8] For the material details of RS 22.225, see Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee, *La trouvaille épigraphique de l'Ougarit*, Ras Shamra-Ougarit 5, vol. 1: *Concordance* (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1989), p. 284 and fig. 36 (hereafter *TEO* 1); Manfried Dietrich et al., *The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places (KTU: second, enlarged edition)*, Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt-Syrien-Palästinas und Mesopotamiens 8 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995) (hereafter KTU$^2$).

[9] The Ugaritic text was published by Charles Virolleaud, "Un nouvel épisode du mythe ugaritique de Baal," *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* (1960): 180–86. That the text is essentially concerned with "the (Evil) Eye" and that its literary genre is incantatory was demonstrated by Gregorio del Olmo Lete, "Un conjuro ugarítico contra el 'mal ojo' (KTU 1.96)," *Anuario de Filología* 15 (1992): 7–16; abundant comparative parallels were provided by J. N. Ford, "'Ninety-nine by the Evil Eye and One from Natural Causes': KTU$^2$ 1.96 in its Near Eastern Context," *Ugarit Forschungen* 30 (1998): 201–78.

[10] For the syllabic text, see Jean Nougayrol, "'Vocalises' et 'syllabes en liberté' à Ugarit," in *Studies in Honor of Benno Landsberger on His Seventy-fifth Birthday, April 21, 1965*, Assyriological Studies 16, edited by Hans G. Güterbock and Thorkild Jacobsen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), pp. 29–31.

[11] *TEO* 1, p. 236.

[12] See Miguel Civil and Douglas A. Kennedy, "Middle Babylonian Grammatical Texts," in *The Sag-Tablet, Lexical Texts in the Ashmolean Museum, Middle Babylonian Grammatical Texts, Miscellaneous Texts*, Materials for the Sumerian Lexicon, Supplementary Series 1 (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1986), pp. 75–89.

[13] Van Soldt, "Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts," p. 174.

[14] For the southern Levant, see also Aaron Demsky, "The Education of Canaanite Scribes in the Mesopotamian Cuneiform Tradition," in *Bar-Ilan Studies in Assyriology Dedicated to Pinhas Artzi*, edited by Jacob Klein and Aaron Skaist (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1990), pp. 163–64.

[15] Van Soldt, "Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts," pp. 176–77.

[16] A. Leo Oppenheim, *Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 13: "For the purpose of understanding what these tablets meant to those who wrote them, it is essential to realize that all written documents ... reflect two distinct backgrounds. ... First, there is the large number of tablets that belong to what I will call the stream of tradition—that is, what can loosely be termed the corpus of literary texts maintained, controlled, and carefully kept alive by a tradition served by successive generations of learned and well-trained scribes. Second, there is the mass of texts of all descriptions, united by the fact that they were used to record the day-to-day activities of the Babylonians and Assyrians (the ancient peoples themselves). ... the second level could never have been written without that cultural continuum maintained so effectively by the scribal tradition."

the texts that made up the stream of tradition,"[17] then certainly also and especially in the west, far from Babylon, only the constant maintenance of this "stream of tradition" in the school setting could have made the continuity of such local manifestations of the Mesopotamian literary tradition possible.

On the basis of these specific and general considerations, then, we can propose a hypothetical and admittedly over-simplified[18] typology of text types within the scribal curriculum as practiced at Ugarit by students learning Mesopotamian cuneiform:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | lists of syllabic signs | (tu-ta-ti, etc.) |
| 2. | thematic lists of word signs | (various sections of Ḫḫ, etc.) |
| 3. | model documents | (model contracts, model accounts, etc.) |
| 4. | thematic lists of "knowledge" | (omen compendia: Šumma Izbu, Enūma Anu Enlil, etc.) |
| 5. | "poetry/literature" | (Ludingira, Gilgameš, incantations, etc.) |

The preserved school texts thus reflect at least five different educational functions: (1) the learning of the graphic inventory necessary to read and write syllabic cuneiform effectively; (2) the learning of thematic inventories of words, necessary for understanding logograms and their meanings;[19] (3) the learning of appropriate formats and structures according to text genre; (4) the learning of traditional lore, be it divinatory, legal, sapiential, or medical, in the form of lists of protasis-apodosis units;[20] and finally, (5) the learning of traditional literary works in poetic form, some of these being narratives about the gods.

This five-part typological schema also applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the corpus of alphabetic school texts.[21] If we may understand the five-part generic schema for the Mesopotamian curriculum as a kind of pedagogical template for keeping alive the stream of tradition in its western peripheral manifestation then by extension a corresponding Ugaritic schema would represent a local calque of the Mesopotamian system, intended for a similar purpose: an attempt to affirm an independent and distinctive local identity through the establishment and maintenance of a written tradition.

Before fleshing out this typology with examples from the alphabetic corpus, however, it is appropriate to address the potential methodological problem of comparing apples to oranges: Is it legitimate to explain the alphabetic curriculum on the analogy of a model intended for the learning of logo-syllabic writing and of Mesopotamian languages?

Against the use of such an analogy, two considerations come to mind: (1) the two graphic systems are based on radically different principles, and (2) the contents of the two "streams of tradition" are different. Despite these reservations, however, the answer to the question posed above is an unequivocal "yes." The reasons for this are briefly reviewed here.[22]

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[17] Oppenheim, *Ancient Mesopotamia*, p. 14.

[18] The five-part schema which follows is not intended to be exhaustive; indeed, many text genres known to have been part of contemporary school curricula were very likely also part of the local Ugaritian school traditions, though they are still not yet directly attested, or only very poorly attested. Rather, the five generic categories presented here are intended merely to reflect those categories which are well documented on the local level, and (since in what follows, an attempt will be made to apply this typology to the alphabetic Ugaritic curriculum) which have clear and well-documented parallels in the alphabetic tradition. Nor is the order of these text types irrefutable: for some transitions, no evidence is available; and for others, the available evidence is occasionally contradictory. The order presented here reflects essentially the principle of a progressive level of difficulty, but this is an admittedly subjective criterion.

[19] For many "bilingual" Mesopotamian lists, this category unites the learning of a graphic inventory (logograms) with that of a lexical inventory (Akkadian translations in syllabic spellings).

[20] These units of "knowledge" are empirical in nature: the protasis generally posits an observable phenomenon and the apodosis draws a conclusion on the basis of that observation.

[21] Expressed somewhat differently by van Soldt, "Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts," p. 183: "the scribes who were trained to write texts in alphabetic script had to write two types of exercises: the alphabet and practice texts."

[22] Most of these have already been evoked by van Soldt, "Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts," pp. 183–86.

## A. General Historical and Cultural Context

Mesopotamian scribal traditions have a long history of transmission in the west. In the case of Ugarit, it is reasonable to imagine a continuous scribal tradition from at least the eighteenth century[23] down through the end of the Late Bronze Age.[24] On the other hand, the institutionalized use of the alphabetic script for the administration of the kingdom's affairs appears to be relatively late.[25] This situation thus provides a general cultural context which lends itself well to the application of the long-established Mesopotamian scribal tradition as a model for the teaching and learning of a more recently developed local alphabetic script.

## B. Local Scribes Were Functional in Both Systems

The bi-graphic nature of the Ras Shamra epigraphic corpus as a whole shows that the indigenous scribes learned and worked in both systems, the Mesopotamian logo-syllabic script and the local alphabetic script. Even on the level of individual archives there are no examples of a clear separation of the two systems.[26]

Documents composed by certain individual scribes are occasionally attested in both scripts. Van Soldt had identified Burqānu and suggested ʾIli-Milku as documented examples of such "bi-scriptal" scribes.[27] At a recent conference, Florence Malbran-Labat and Carole Roche proposed adding the scribe Ur(i)-Tešab to this group, whose "bi-scriptal" activity is best documented in the so-called House of Urtenu.[28]

Finally, a considerable number of texts employ both writing systems. Roche recently emphasized the high percentage of such "mixed" tablets from the House of Urtenu.[29] One particularly striking example is RS 94.2411, a census of "households" per village.[30] Seemingly inexplicably, part of the list is written alphabetically and another part logo-syllabically. The presence of both scripts in specifically scholastic texts, such as RS 19.159 (KTU$^2$ 5.14),[31] is another indication of the general appropriateness of applying a Mesopotamian model to the elaboration

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[23] Different conclusions on this point were reached by Manfried Dietrich, "Aspects of the Babylonian Impact on Ugaritic Literature and Religion," in *Ugarit, Religion and Culture: Proceedings of the International Colloquium, Edinburgh, July 1994: Essays Presented in Honour of Professor John C. L. Gibson*, Ugaritisch-Biblische Literatur 12, edited by Nicolas Wyatt et al. (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1996), pp. 33–47.

[24] Very little epigraphic material from the period prior to ca. 1350 B.C. has been recovered from Ras Shamra itself; see Daniel Arnaud, "Prolégomènes à la rédaction d'une histoire d'Ougarit I: Ougarit avant Suppiluliuma I$^{er}$," *Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici* 39 (1997): 151–61. Still, the implications of the "Ugarit" dossier from the Mari archives (see Pierre Villard, "Un roi de Mari à Ugarit," *Ugarit Forschungen* 18 [1987]: 387–412), and the general cultural background of northern Syria during "the Amorite Age" (see Dominique Charpin, "Histoire politique du Proche-Orient Amorrite (2002–1595)," in *Mesopotamien: Die altbabylonische Zeit*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 160/4, edited by D. Charpin, D. O. Edzard, and M. Stol [Fribourg and Göttingen: Academic Press and Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004], pp. 29–38), strongly suggest the existence of a local (Mesopotamian style) chancery at Ugarit already in the eighteenth century B.C. That there was a high degree of continuity in the local scribal tradition from the eighteenth through the mid-fourteenth century B.C. seems likely, given the general historical and archeological picture of the Middle Bronze–Late Bronze transition, and, more particularly, given the distinctive formal aspects of the Late Bronze Akkadian texts from Ras Shamra, which for the most part cannot be explained on the basis of contemporary Kassite or Middle Assyrian models, but seem rather to be local descendants of Old Babylonian traditions.

[25] Alphabetic writing existed prior to its Ugaritic cuneiform manifestation; see Benjamin Sass, *The Genesis of the Alphabet and Its Development in the Second Millennium B.C.*, Ägypten und Altes Testament 13 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1988). The significant question here is not the date when alphabetic writing was invented, but rather the date when this technology was adopted and adapted to local use on the institutional level. For the latter, several students of Ugaritic writing are now seriously considering a date as late as the thirteenth century B.C.; see Anne-Sophie Dalix, "Ougarit au XIII$^e$ siècle av. J.-C.: nouvelles perspectives historiques," *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* (1997): 819–24; and Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee, *Manuel d'Ougaritique* (Paris: Guethner, 2004), vol. 1, pp. 31–32, with bibliography.

[26] Van Soldt, "Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts," p. 184.

[27] Van Soldt, "Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts," p. 185; see already van Soldt, *Akkadian of Ugarit*, pp. 26–29.

[28] Florence Malbran-Labat and Carole Roche, "Ourtenou, Ourteshab," paper presented at the Congrès International Sherbrooke: "Le royaume d'Ougarit de la Crète à l'Euphrate. Nouveaux axes de recherche," July 5–8, 2005, at the Université de Sherbrooke, Québec.

[29] See the contribution of Carole Roche in this volume.

[30] For some preliminary information, see Dennis Pardee, "Épigraphie et structure dans les textes administratifs en langue ougaritique: les exemples de RS 6.216 et RS 19.017," *Orientalia* NS 70 (2001): 272–76; for a brief description of the text and a very legible photo of the recto, see Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee, "Recension de villes et de villages du royaume (RS 94.2411)," in *Le royaume d'Ougarit: Aux origines de l'alphabet*, Exhibition Catalogue, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, October 21, 2004, through January 17, 2005, edited by Geneviève Galliano and Yves Calvet (Lyon and Paris: Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon and Somogy Éditions d'Art, 2004), p. 35. The *editio princeps* will be published by Bordreuil and Pardee, "Les textes ougaritiques des campagnes 1994–2002," in *Études ougaritiques*, vol. 2, Ras Shamra-Ougarit series, edited by Marguerite Yon (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, forthcoming).

[31] *TEO* 1, p. 211; Charles Virolleaud, *Le palais royal d'Ugarit*, vol. 2: *Textes en cunéiformes alphabétiques des archives est, ouest et centrales*, Mission de Ras Shamra 7 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale & Klincksieck, 1957), No. 189.

of the Ugaritic scribal curriculum. This sign list, an abecedary, is not organized horizontally, the format customary for alphabetic sign lists, but rather vertically, in the manner of Mesopotamian sign and word lists. Thus, not only are both writing systems present, but the text also adopts an organizational principle of Mesopotamian lexical lists: a multi-column format,[32] with "signs" in the left column, and probably the "name" of the sign, at least as it had been memorized by the Ugaritian students of the thirteenth century, in the right column.[33]

### C. Formulaic Style is Identical, Regardless of Script

The formulaic protocol in epistolary texts and in contracts from the Ras Shamra and Ras Ibn Hani archives, to cite two genres as examples, is not script specific. More importantly, this local formulary is distinct from those used in roughly contemporary Mesopotamian sites such as Nippur or even Assur.

### D. Pragmatic Function

Finally, on a purely practical level, a typology drawn from a Mesopotamian model works. There are no significant lacunae in the Ugaritic inventory, and no major categories missing from the Mesopotamian model necessary to explain the Ugaritic curriculum.

## 2. Remarks on the Structure of the Alphabetic School Curriculum

Considering the full range of those Ugaritic texts susceptible to interpretation as school exercises, and in light of the general appropriateness of a Mesopotamian analogy in attempting to understand this corpus, it seems reasonable to propose that: (1) the *structure* of the alphabetic scribal curriculum was calqued from the model of the traditional Mesopotamian curriculum, at least as it had been taught and learned at Ugarit itself, but (2) the *content* of the alphabetic curriculum was distinctively local:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | lists of signs | (abecedaries, etc.) |
| 2. | thematic lists of words | (gods, kings, towns, professions, personal names, etc.) |
| 3. | model documents | (model letters, model accounts, etc.) |
| 4. | thematic lists of "knowledge" | (omen compendia, medical compendia) |
| 5. | "poetry/literature" | (Baʿlu Cycle, Kirta, ʾAqhatu, incantations, etc.) |

The first three categories were no doubt learned by all alphabetic scribes. Such exercises do, after all, inculcate the knowledge necessary to compose the mundane documents of daily life: administrative accounts, letters, legal texts, and the like. It is conceivable that the last two categories belong within the general scribal curriculum as well, though at a more advanced level, since the archival distribution of texts reflecting these latter two categories does suggest grouping them with the former three, and since such a presentation would better encapsulate the Ugaritic "stream of tradition" as a whole. It is also possible, however, that only a certain specialized sub-class of scribes went on to the more advanced specialties of divination, medicine, and poetry.

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[32] Miguel Civil, "Lexicography," in *Sumerological Studies in Honor of Thorkild Jacobsen on His Seventieth Birthday, June 7, 1974*, Assyriological Studies 20, edited by Stephen J. Lieberman (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 124–25. The two columns of RS 19.159 correspond, *mutatis mutandis*, to elements 2 and 3 of Civil's typology. Element 1 is absent, probably owing to the fact that polyvalency was not a serious problem for those learning the alphabetic system; elements 4 and beyond are also absent, of course, since the local sign inventory is not logographic.

[33] William W. Hallo, "Isaiah 28:9–13 and the Ugaritic Abecedaries," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 77 (1958): 336. Since the Mesopotamian syllabary is extremely ill-suited to express the consonantal distinctions important in Ugaritic, it seems very unlikely that the right column had any phonological importance (that is, it did not allude to "the pronunciation" of the corresponding alphabetic consonantal signs in anything more than a vague and imprecise way).

For each of these five major categories representing the stream of Ugaritic scribal tradition, we can imagine, and in many cases we have actual examples of, school exercises designed to teach and reinforce a corresponding pedagogical content. The Ugaritic scribal curriculum is thus documented both by direct evidence in the form of actual scribal exercises, and by indirect evidence in the form of texts whose form and content can be explained only by positing the existence of an underlying pedagogical exercise. Unfortunately, there are no known Ugaritic literary sources comparable to the Sumerian school dialogues[34] which could present a native portrait of scribal education from the perspective of the local literary imagination.

For reasons of space, a typology of Ugaritic tablet types among the school texts is not developed here. In any case, despite a certain degree of regularity of tablet form according to each category, and even occasional sub-sets,[35] the Ugaritic data are unfortunately too insufficient to generate anything comparable to what Miguel Civil has developed for Old Babylonian school texts.[36] For the same reasons, neither is a detailed reconstruction of the sequence in which the specific alphabetic exercises were studied attempted here. There are few, if any, clear examples of catch lines among the elementary Ugaritic exercises, and those tablets which contain more than one exercise present a fairly wide variety of sequences. Observations on tablet type and on the order of the curriculum in the following pages are therefore ad hoc rather than systematic.

## 3. REMARKS ON THE CONTENT OF THE ALPHABETIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM[37]

The paragraphs which follow attempt to flesh out in greater detail each of the five categories suggested above, and especially to provide clear and unambiguous Ugaritic examples which represent them. The categories are not discussed in the order originally presented, but rather according to a criterion of certainty as to whether the genre in question was a generalized part of local scribal education: the genres which almost certainly belong within the broader school curriculum are treated first, followed by those whose status within the curriculum is less well documented.

### A. Sign Lists

Of the individual Ugaritic elements within the broader five-part typology suggested here, few would argue about the legitimacy of the initial category, "lists of signs." The best-attested example, of course, is the standard or "canonical" abecedary. Nor would many dispute the local character of this particular sign list, which reflects a Levantine predilection for noting essentially consonantal phonemes.

The number of signs of the standard abecedary and their order are fixed, and it is these thirty signs, more or less in the forms attested by the abecedaries, which provide the graphic inventory of virtually all the documents in Ugaritic cuneiform.[38]

Numerous manuscripts of this elementary sign list are available for study,[39] more in fact than is generally recognized,[40] and one may isolate several distinct sub-genres among them. In addition to the "canonical" list, a single

[34] Åke W. Sjöberg, "The Old Babylonian Eduba," in *Sumerological Studies in Honor of Thorkild Jacobsen*, pp. 159–79; Herman Vanstiphout, "School Dialogues," in *The Context of Scripture*, vol. 1: *Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*, edited by W. W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger, Jr. (Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 588–93.

[35] For the Ugaritic mythological texts, for example, one can identify local equivalents both of OB Type I tablets (large tablets divided into multiple columns) and of OB Type II extract tablets (single column, writing parallel to narrow side). See Miguel Civil, *The Series lú = ša and Related Texts*, Materials for the Sumerian Lexicon 12 (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1969), pp. 27f.

[36] Civil, MSL 12, pp. 27f.

[37] See Manfried Dietrich and Oswald Loretz, *Die Keilalphabete, Die phönizisch-kanaanäischen und altarabischen Alphabete in Ugarit*, Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt-Syrien-Palästinas 1 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1988), pp. 179–99; van Soldt, "Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts," pp. 183–89; Ignacio Márquez Rowe, "Syllabic and Alphabetic Texts—A Further Note of Scribal Education at Ugarit," *Ugarit Forschungen* 28 (1996): 457–62; and KTU², pp. 489–97.

[38] On the texts (very few in number) in the "short alphabet," see Dietrich and Loretz, *Keilalphabete*, pp. 145–79.

[39] For a list, see Dietrich and Loretz, *Keilalphabete*, pp. 180–81; KTU², pp. 489–97; van Soldt, "Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts," p. 195.

[40] RS 5.274 (KTU² 7.54; *TEO* 1, p. 38) and RS 19.174 [4] (*TEO* 1, p. 221), for example, are fragmentary "canonical" abecedaries (both collated).

exemplar of a distinctly different, "non-canonical" alphabetic sign inventory was discovered in 1988.[41] The origins of this second alphabetic sign inventory are unknown,[42] but in any case this was not the sign inventory in productive use at thirteenth-century Ugarit.

As an inventory of signs learned in a fixed order, the standard abecedary finds an obvious Mesopotamian parallel in the elementary syllabary Tu-ta-ti, itself attested in at least five examples from Ras Shamra,[43] indicating that it was part of the local Mesopotamian cursus.[44] The organizational format of the alphabetic sign list is horizontal, however, in contrast to the essentially vertical organization of Mesopotamian sign lists.

## B. Model Documents

Another virtually certain category within the local alphabetic curriculum is that of "model documents." The clearest examples of this genre in the alphabetic corpus are the model letters RS 16.265 (KTU$^2$ 5.9)[45] and RS 94.2273.[46] That these two texts were both scribal exercises seems clear not only from their content,[47] but also and especially from the presence of other scribal exercise texts on the same tablet.[48]

Another plausible Ugaritic example of this category, this time representing a model administrative account, is RS 94.2519, soon to be published.[49] It is a bi-graphic[50] account presenting an identical sequence of professions with associated numbers: in alphabetic script on one side, and in Mesopotamian logo-syllabic script on the other. Its shape and format are also appropriate for a scribal exercise: the tablet is rectangular,[51] with one side inscribed in "portrait" format, the other in "landscape."[52]

As for the formulaic models themselves, it is clear that the alphabetic model letters reflect the local epistolary protocol, and not the style of contemporary Kassite and Middle Assyrian letters.[53] There are not yet any known examples of Ugaritic "model contracts," but it would not be surprising if such documents eventually turn up, reflecting the formulaic protocol of the local juridical texts.

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[41] RS 88.2215; see Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee, "Abécédaire (no. 32)," in *Études ougaritiques*, vol. 1: *Travaux 1985–1995*, Ras Shamra-Ougarit 14, edited by Marguerite Yon and Daniel Arnaud (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 2001), pp. 341–48, with bibliography.

[42] Since elements of cultural heritage are especially susceptible to borrowing, it seems incautious to assume mechanically that the Late Bronze attestations of the "hlḫm" order, both of which are Levantine (Ras Shamra and Beth Shemesh), are to be explained as originating in Arabia, when it is only several centuries later that the "hlḫm" order is attested in Arabia. For a clear presentation of the problem of origin, see Benjamin Sass, *The Alphabet at the Turn of the Millennium: The West Semitic Alphabet ca. 1150–850 BCE, The Antiquity of the Arabian, Greek and Phrygian Alphabets*, Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University Occasional Publications 4 (Tel Aviv: Emery and Claire Yass Publications in Archaeology, 2005), pp. 96–132, and esp. pp. 122–23.

[43] Nougayrol, "'Vocalises' et 'syllabes en liberté' à Ugarit," pp. 29–31, and 39 (RS 20.125+; RS 20.155; RS 22.225; RS 25.446+); van Soldt, "Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts," p. 196, adds an additional manuscript (RS 25.450) to the four identified by Nougayrol.

[44] The order of Tu-ta-ti in the local manuscripts copied at Ugarit was fixed, but this order is not identical with the order of Tu-ta-ti in manuscripts known from other sites and periods; see Nougayrol, "'Vocalises' et 'syllabes en liberté' à Ugarit," p. 30 (my thanks to Peter Daniels and Wilfred van Soldt for clarification on this point).

[45] *TEO* 1, p. 112; Virolleaud, *Palais royal d'Ugarit* 2, text 19. See also Dennis Pardee, "Scribal Exercises," in *The Context of Scripture*, vol. 3: *Archival Documents from the Biblical World*, edited by W. W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger, Jr. (Leiden: Brill, 2002), p. 115.

[46] See the preliminary English translation of Dennis Pardee, "Scribal Exercises," p. 115. The Mesopotamian text on the verso of RS 94.2273 is also a school text: an extract from the Silbenalphabet A (Syllable Alphabet A).

[47] Note the unusually elaborate benediction, the frivolity of the "message," and the grammatical practice (various volitional forms of YTN "to give") in RS 16.265. RS 94.2273 contains only introductory formulas.

[48] In addition to a model letter, RS 16.265 also contains two sequences of the standard abecedary and a word list in alphabetic script; RS 94.2273 has a model letter (in alphabetic script) on one side and, on the other, two parallel extracts (probably master and student) from the Mesopotamian exercise Silbenalphabet A.

[49] Bordreuil and Pardee, "Les textes ougaritiques des campagnes 1994–2002," text 18. Provisionally, see P. Bordreuil and D. Pardee, "Catalogue raisonné des textes ougaritiques de la Maison d'Ourtenou," *Aula Orientalis* 17–18 (1999–2000): 27.

[50] "Bi-graphic" is preferable to "bi-lingual"; see Florence Malbran-Labat, "Langues et écritures à Ougarit," *Semitica* 49 (1999): 87–101.

[51] The longer side is ca. 82 mm, and the shorter side, at ca. 61+ mm, presents a width to height ratio of slightly over 74%. Cf. RS 94.2273 (77 mm, and 75%); and RS 16.265 (76 mm, and 62%).

[52] In RS 94.2519, the alphabetic text is in "landscape" format, the Mesopotamian text, "portrait." The same disposition is found in RS 94.2273. In RS 16.265 (entirely alphabetic), the word list is in "landscape" format, the epistolary text in "portrait." Juan-Pablo Vita discussed this feature of certain scribal exercises with me (personal communication).

[53] The contemporary Hittite and southern Levantine (attested in the Amarna corpus) epistolary styles are more closely related, though still not identical with the local Ugaritian protocol. On these matters, see Robert Hawley, "Studies in Ugaritic Epistolography" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2003), with bibliography.

In regard to the curricular order, it is not inappropriate to imagine, at least in some cases, a sequential connection between category 1 (lists of signs) and category 3 (model documents), since both of these are present on RS 16.265. Furthermore, the combination of exercises on the other clear model letter, RS 94.2273, suggests that training in the alphabetic and Mesopotamian traditions was parallel, not successive.

A final type of exercise should also be mentioned here: lists of personal names arranged acrographically. This type of text, attested from Ras Shamra in both script systems,[54] bridges the gap between the categories of "model documents" and "thematic lists of words." Like the latter, the elements of these lists all belong to the same semantic category: in this case, personal names. Unlike the other members of that category, however, there is little or no evidence that these lists were learned in a particular fixed order; the single observable organizational principle is their acrographic arrangement. Rather, in terms of pedagogical function, they seem more closely related to "model documents." The clearest alphabetic examples are RS 1.016 (KTU$^2$ 5.1),[55] RS 19.003 (KTU$^2$ 4.607),[56] and RS 22.001 (KTU$^2$ 5.18).[57]

## C. Thematic Word Lists

Since Ugaritic writing was neither logographic nor syllabic, and since the Ugaritian scribes had no need to learn their own language, one could easily conclude that there was little need for local Ugaritic equivalents of the well-known Mesopotamian thematic word lists. Yet many aspects of such lexical lists find striking parallels in the alphabetic tradition. Here one is reminded of another of the functions of such lists: not only do thematic lexical lists teach logograms and Akkadian translations (something unnecessary in the alphabetic curriculum), but they were also designed for administrative use, to serve a practical administrative need.

The learning of thematic word lists, probably in a more or less fixed order, would have prepared students of alphabetic cuneiform for their duties in the cultic or economic administration of the kingdom. While it is true that very few, if any, actual scribal exercises of this type have been preserved, we must nevertheless assume their existence on the basis of patterned orderings of words within the administrative and sacrificial accounts. It is thus above all indirect evidence which allows the elaboration of this category. Four distinct types of thematic word lists can be reconstructed within the alphabetic curriculum: villages, professions, dead kings, and gods.

### 1. Toponym Lists

Michael Astour, Pierre Bordreuil, and Wilfred van Soldt, among others, have drawn attention to the fact that the local toponyms within administrative accounts often appear in ordered patterns.[58] One cannot reconstruct a single fixed canonical order, but it is possible to recognize lower-level patterns of ordering and grouping. The main criterion governing the order was geography. Such patterns must have been taught and learned during scribal training. One fairly good illustration of such a school setting comes from an actual exercise, RS 94.2440.[59] In terms of tablet type, this text represents essentially a local equivalent of an Old Babylonian Type II tablet,[60] with a space after the teacher's version for the student to practice, although here the presentation is oriented horizontally instead of vertically. In addition to practicing the alphabet, however, the student also practiced writing some local toponyms. More importantly, he wrote them in ordered patterns: Mulukku, ʾAru, and ʾAtallig are all coastal "Group 8" towns according to van Soldt's classification; the other two place names represent "Group 5" towns. These groupings reappear elsewhere in administrative documents.[61]

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[54] For examples in Mesopotamian script, see RS 15.054 (*TEO* 1, p. 85); RS 20.007 (*TEO* 1, p. 229); and the sequences appended to the local version of Tu-ta-ti, published by Nougayrol in "'Vocalises' et 'syllabes en liberté' à Ugarit," p. 30.

[55] *TEO* 1, p. 17.

[56] *TEO* 1, p. 196.

[57] *TEO* 1, p. 283.

[58] For a comprehensive treatment, see now Wilfred H. van Soldt, *The Topography of the City-State of Ugarit*, Alter Orient und Altes Testament 324 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2005), pp. 1–3, 72–110, with bibliography.

[59] Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee, *Manuel d'Ougaritique* (Paris: Guethner, 2004), vol. 2, pp. 131–32.

[60] Civil, MSL 12, pp. 27–28.

[61] Similar groupings and sequences of these toponyms can be conveniently consulted in van Soldt, *Topography of the City-State of Ugarit*, pp. 88–89 and 95–96.

2. Professions Lists

The same kinds of patterned orderings can also be noticed within lists of professions.[62] As with toponym lists, these patterned orders probably go back to the curriculum. Again, we have no certain examples of the actual exercises used to teach scribes the inventory of the local professions. One possible exception, however, is RS 14.084 (KTU$^2$ 4.126).[63] Although the particular order attested there is not always followed in the administrative texts, it does show up on occasion,[64] as in RS 18.252 (KTU$^2$ 4.416).[65]

3. King Lists

The names of deceased kings were also learned in a certain order, the organizational principle here being chronological.[66] The best-preserved example of this "Ugaritic King List," tracing the royal succession back to an eponymous ancestor named ʾUgarānu, is RS 94.2518, one of four known manuscripts in Mesopotamian cuneiform script.[67] That a very similar, perhaps identical list was also part of the alphabetic curriculum is suggested by the single manuscript of the text in alphabetic script.[68] Though fragmentary, the legible portions of the Ugaritic version correspond to Kings 8–20[69] of the more complete syllabic version.

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[62] See P. Vargyas, "Stratification sociale à Ugarit," in *Society and Economy in the Eastern Mediterranean (c. 1500–1000 B.C.). Proceedings of the International Symposium Held at the University of Haifa from the 28th of April to the 2nd of May, 1985*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 23, edited by Michael Heltzer and Edward Lipiński (Louvain: Peeters, 1988), pp. 117–18.

[63] *TEO* 1, p. 80; Charles Virolleaud, "Six textes de Ras Shamra provenant de la 14$^e$ campagne," *Syria* 28 (1951): 165–66; Virolleaud, *Palais Royal d'Ugarit* 2, texte 26. The tablet was re-edited by Dennis Pardee, "Les hommes du roi propriétaires de champs: les textes ougaritiques RS 15.116 et RS 19.016," *Semitica* 49 (1999): 59–64. In the latter the order of recto and verso was reversed from the *editio princeps* (this conclusion was also reached independently by P. Bordreuil; see Pardee, "Les hommes du roi," p. 61 n. 117), on the grounds that one of the surfaces of the tablet was significantly flatter than the other. Typically it is the recto that is flat; the scribes apparently usually left any given tablet verso upward upon finishing it; gravity then caused the recto surface to flatten considerably before the drying process had been completed. Pardee chose to favor this physical criterion over formal evidence from several professions lists beginning with the order *mrynm, mr'um, ʿšrm*, etc., arguing (p. 61 n. 116) that since "l'ordre n'est fixe ni à l'intérieur des groupements ni entre eux ... il ne faut pas prêter à ce critère [i.e., the fact that *mrynm*, etc., often begins professions lists] trop de poids en essayant de déterminer l'orientation *recto/verso* de telle tablette fragmentaire." The example he cited is the list of professions in RS 11.716 (KTU$^2$ 4.68), where the sequence *ʿšrm, mr'um* (not *nr'um, ʿšrm*) is found mid-way through the list (not at the beginning) and *mrynm* is absent altogether. There is no clear solution in cases such as these, where conclusions reached on physical criteria contradict those reached on formal grounds. One possible scenario, however, which would salvage both lines of evidence, might explain the fact that it is the recto that is usually flat as circumstantial and related to the genre and function of the tablet in question. If, for example, RS 14.084 were an exercise, instead of leaving the tablet lying on a flat surface verso upward (the usual situation, resulting in a flat recto), the student scribe might have turned it over upon its completion, perhaps in a gesture of consideration toward his teacher who would have checked it, leaving the recto side upward (which would have caused the verso to flatten before the tablet hardened).

[64] Note, however, the reservations of Pardee, "Les hommes du roi," p. 61: "On peut dire que certaines professions sont souvent groupées ... mais l'ordre n'est fixe ni à l'intérieur des groupements ni entre eux ..." The absence of a single fixed order which governs all lists of professions, however, does not negate the significance of lower-level patterns of ordering within the groups, as van Soldt has convincingly shown with respect to toponym lists; see now his *Topography of the City-State of Ugarit*, pp. 72–110.

[65] *TEO* 1, p. 166.

[66] The Mesopotamian parallels are obvious; for a survey, see Dietz Otto Edzard, "Königslisten und Chroniken (Sumerisch)"; and A. Kirk Grayson, "Königslisten und Chroniken (Akkadisch)," in *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* 6 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1980), pp. 77–135.

[67] Daniel Arnaud, "Prolégomènes à la rédaction d'une histoire d'Ougarit II: Les bordereaux de rois divinisés," *Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici* 41 (1999): 153–73. Note that Arnaud himself (p. 168) did not understand these texts as school exercises, but rather as "bordereaux" owing to the "checkmarks" or "coches" which follow each entry; so also Dennis Pardee, *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit*, SBL Writings from the Ancient World 10 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2002), p. 200. The presence of these checkmarks in and of themselves is not inconsistent with the hypothesis that these are exercises (the checkmarks could reflect that the teacher checked the student's copy), but the point is immaterial. The fact that this particular fixed order is attested in multiple examples indicates that it was part of the scribal curriculum on some level; if these particular texts were school exercises, then they constitute direct evidence of that curriculum; if they are cultic "bordereaux" they constitute indirect evidence.

[68] RS 24.257 (*TEO* 1, p. 300). For discussion and bibliography, see Pardee, *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit*, pp. 195–210. The hypothesis that RS 24.257 is a scribal exercise, which, I might add, is unproven, also provides a plausible explanation for the presence of a poetic text (fragmentary) on the other side of the tablet: like RS 16.265, RS 22.225, RS 94.2273, and several others, this tablet would have contained more than one discrete exercise.

[69] This portion of the sequence ought to correspond to the seventeenth through the fifteenth centuries B.C., an otherwise virtually undocumented period at Ugarit.

4. God Lists

Finally, sequences of gods' names can be found in the sacrificial lists, such as RS 24.643 (KTU$^2$ 1.148).[70] These same sequences show up occasionally in list form. The sequence in RS 24.643:1–9, for example, is also found in at least two lists: RS 1.017 (KTU$^2$ 1.47)[71] and RS 24.264 (KTU$^2$ 1.118).[72] One of the copies even has the native title of the list: *ʾil ṣpn* "the Gods of Ṣapunu." These are not always recognized as school texts,[73] but that possibility is not to be dismissed lightly. Even the "checkmarks" which precede the individual entries in one of the manuscripts find a striking parallel in the initial DIŠ sign which introduces individual lexical entries in the Mesopotamian list traditions.[74]

## D. Poetry and Literature

That local poetic compositions in alphabetic script could be part of the scribal curriculum at Ugarit is shown by RS 22.225 (KTU$^2$ 1.96).[75] That example contains an incantation, but student exercises also very likely included the copying of extracts from longer, specifically narrative, mythological poems.[76] At least four reasonably clear examples of this practice are known,[77] all of which appear to contain extracts from the Baʿlu Cycle: RS 1.006 (KTU$^2$ 1.13),[78] RS 24.245 (KTU$^2$ 1.101),[79] RS 24.263 (KTU$^2$ 1.117),[80] and RS 24.293 (KTU$^2$ 1.133).[81]

## E. Thematic Lists of "Knowledge"

The final category, here labeled "thematic lists of knowledge," is the least certain of the categories surveyed thus far as an element of the general alphabetic curriculum. Its inclusion here is based on two premises: (1) the "knowledge" conveyed in these texts was part of the local "stream of tradition," and (2) the maintenance of that tradition required at least some level of training.

These texts are not always recognized as being "local" in terms of content.[82] Whether or not these compendia are ultimately of local origin, however, several factors make it likely that they had a longer history of transmission in the west than is generally recognized, as Dennis Pardee has cautiously suggested in a series of recent publications.[83] The corpus of Ugaritic "scientific" texts[84] includes fragmentary manuals of birth omens[85] and astrological

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[70] *TEO* 1, p. 306; for a re-edition, with comprehensive discussion of prior literature, see Dennis Pardee, *Les textes rituels*, Ras Shamra-Ougarit 12 (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 2000), pp. 779–806.

[71] *TEO* 1, p. 17; and Pardee, *Les textes rituels*, pp. 291–319.

[72] *TEO* 1, p. 301; and Pardee, *Les textes rituels*, pp. 659–60.

[73] Exceptions include Wilfred H. van Soldt, "Private Archives at Ugarit," in *Interdependency of Institutions and Private Entrepreneurs*, edited by A. C. V. M. Bongenaar, Proceedings of the Second MOS Symposium (Leiden 1998), MOS Studies 2 (Istanbul and Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut, 2000), p. 243 n. 145; and Ignacio Márquez Rowe, review of Marguerite Yon and Daniel Arnaud, eds., *Études ougaritiques*, I. *Travaux 1985–1995* in *Orientalia* NS 74 (2005): 143 (my thanks to I. Márquez Rowe for these references).

[74] That is, it is tentatively suggested here that these "checkmarks" or "coches" represent local equivalents of "Element 0" in Civil's typology of the structuring principles of Mesopotamian lexical lists ("Lexicography," pp. 124–25); see also Márquez Rowe, *Orientalia* NS 74 (2005), p. 143. For other interpretations of the "checkmarks," many of which are not necessarily mutually exclusive, see Pardee, *Les textes rituels*, p. 660.

[75] See above, note 8.

[76] Dennis Pardee, *Les textes para-mythologiques de la 24$^e$ campagne (1961)*, Ras Shamra-Ougarit 4 (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1988), p. 265; Manfried Dietrich and Oswald Loretz, "Mythen als Schultexte: KTU 1.133; 1.152 und die Vorlagen KTU 1.5 I 11–22; 1.15 IV 6–8," *Ugarit Forschungen* 23 (1992): 91–102.

[77] The group is internally homogenous in many respects: tablet form and size, text format, even script, which is "grande et grossière," to adopt the characterization of Andrée Herdner, *Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabétiques découvertes à Ras Shamra-Ugarit de 1929 à 1939*, Mission de Ras Shamra 10, Bibliothèque Archéologique et Historique 79 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale and P. Geuthner, 1963), p. 56.

[78] *TEO* 1, p. 16; Herdner, *Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabétiques*, pp. 56–58.

[79] *TEO* 1, p. 299; Pardee, *Les textes para-mythologiques*, ch. 3.

[80] *TEO* 1, p. 301; Pardee, *Les textes para-mythologiques*, ch. 9.

[81] *TEO* 1, p. 303; Pardee, *Les textes para-mythologiques*, ch. 4.

[82] See van Soldt, "Babylonian Lexical, Religious and Literary Texts," p. 186, who expresses the widely held view that "religious texts such as omen compendia ... probably go back to Babylonian originals."

[83] Dennis Pardee, "Ugaritic Omens, Ugaritic Extispicy," in *The Context of Scripture*, vol. 1: *Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*, edited by W. W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger, Jr. (Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 287–94; Pardee, "Ugaritic Science," in *World of the Aramaeans: Studies in Language and Literature in Honour of Paul Eugène Dion*, edited by P. M. Michèle Daviau et al. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), vol. 3, pp. 223–54; and Pardee, *Ritual and Cult*, pp. 127–48, with bibliography.

[84] If Ugaritic versions of law collections and proverb collections are discovered one day, they too ought to belong in this category.

[85] Two different compositions, RS 24.247+ (KTU$^2$ 1.103; *TEO* 1, p. 300) and RS 24.302 (KTU$^2$ 1.140; *TEO* 1, p. 304); Pardee, *Les textes rituels*, pp. 532–64, 763–65. See Manfried Dietrich and Oswald Loretz, *Mantik in Ugarit: Keilalphabetische Texte der Opferschau, Omensammlungen, Nekromantie*, Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt-Syrien-Palästinas 3 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1990), pp. 89–165.

omens,[86] probably a manual of dream omens,[87] and a number of copies of a single manual of veterinary medicine.[88] In terms of form and function, the latter has no known parallel in other ancient Near Eastern cuneiform traditions.[89] The other three types of compendia do, of course, have well-known parallels, especially from Mesopotamia, but none of the known Mesopotamian versions of Šumma izbu, Enūma Anu Enlil, or the Dream Book represent possible *Vorlagen* of the Ugaritic versions. Even on the level of individual protasis-apodosis pairs there are no known parallels. Granted, the Ugaritic versions are generally quite fragmentary; and it is certainly possible that they do, in fact, represent translations of known or unknown Akkadian originals. But given the clearly local content of the other elements of the curriculum, it seems more plausible that these Ugaritic compendia reflect the setting down in writing of local divinatory and medical oral lore. The date of this was probably more or less contemporary with the institutionalization of the alphabetic script as the major graphic vehicle of Ugaritic palace administration, that is, with the creation of a local written "stream of tradition," whenever that happened.[90]

## CONCLUSION

The Ugaritian attempt to affirm an independent and distinctive local identity through the establishment and maintenance of a written alphabetic tradition can be characterized as structurally calqued from the Mesopotamian tradition, but genuinely local in terms of content. Judging from the very different alphabetic material known from the Iron Age Levant, this attempt at establishing a local written tradition ultimately failed, at least in this particular form. But the fact that such an attempt was even made, and the great originality with which the endeavor was pursued, ensures a privileged place for the scribes of Ugarit in the history of writing.

[86] RIH 78/14 (KTU² 1.163; *TEO* 1, p. 366); Pardee, *Les textes rituels*, pp. 859–71; Dietrich and Loretz, *Mantik in Ugarit*, pp. 165–95.

[87] RS 18.041 (KTU² 1.86; *TEO* 1, p. 158); Pardee, *Les textes rituels*, pp. 457–68.

[88] RS 17.120 (KTU² 1.85; *TEO* 1, p. 130) is virtually complete. There are also three fragmentary manuscripts: RS 5.285+ (KTU² 1.72; *TEO* 1, p. 39); RS 5.300 (KTU² 1.71; *TEO* 1, p. 39); RS 23.484 (KTU² 1.97; *TEO* 1, p. 295). See Dennis Pardee, *Les textes hippiatriques*, Ras Shamra-Ougarit 2 (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1985); Chaim Cohen and Daniel Sivan, *The Ugaritic Hippiatric Texts: A Critical Edition*, American Oriental Society 9 (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1983); and Chaim Cohen, "The Ugaritic Hippiatric Texts: Revised Composite Text, Translation and Commentary," *Ugarit Forschungen* 28 (1996): 105–53.

[89] In other words, there are no other known examples of manuals devoted exclusively to symptoms and remedies for equine ailments, although specific symptom-remedy pairs for sick horses do crop up here and there in Neo-Assyrian copies of medical manuals devoted to human ailments; see Chaim Cohen, "The Ugaritic Hippiatric Texts and BAM 159," *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society* 15 (1983): 1–12.

[90] See above, p. 58